

ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

January – February

Cranston, RI – The Cranston School Committee voted not to appeal a decision by U.S. District Court Judge Ronald Lagueux mandating the removal of a prayer mural from the wall of an auditorium at Cranston High School West because the process could be prohibitively expensive. In January, the judge had sided with the complainants—a student atheist and the ACLU. The atheist group, American Humanist Association, applauded the school's decision not to appeal.



January 2

David Clohessy, president of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), was deposed regarding his role in cases of priestly sexual abuse pursuant to an order by a Missouri judge issued at the end of 2011. Clohessy fought the order vigorously, but he lost. The deposition was made public in March and is available on the Catholic League website. It demonstrated SNAP's fraudulence beyond any reasonable doubt. Bill Donohue noted in a news release, "Even if Clohessy started out as an activist for justice, it is crystal clear that he has evolved into something altogether different." *For Donohue's special report, SNAP UNRAVELS, [click [here](#)].*

January 6 – 8

Boston, MA – The "10th Anniversary Celebration & Conference" was convened to "celebrate" media reports of 2002 on the Boston clergy sexual abuse scandal. The speakers included actors, artists, activists from the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, psychiatrists, lawyers, and journalists. They were all representatives of the professional victims' lobby and had a demonstrated history of anti-Catholicism. The event ended on a Sunday at Boston's Holy Cross Cathedral, not for the purpose of going to Mass, but to hold a demonstration,

even though the scandal ended in the 1980s. Seventy-five people attended the conference, 25 of whom were the speakers.

February – November

Kalispell, MT – Since 2010, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) had waged a campaign to remove a statue of Jesus from a mountainside location; the Knights of Columbus (KofC) erected the statue in 1955 as a memorial to the fallen of World War II. FFRF had initially pressured the U.S. Forest Service to remove the statue from its location on federal land in Montana. After public outcry, the Forest Service reversed its decision in February. FFRF responded by suing to have the memorial removed permanently.

On May 30, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, on behalf of the KofC and several other members individually, petitioned the U.S. District Court to intervene as defendants on First Amendment grounds. The petition was granted the next day by order of the judge, who acknowledged that the First Amendment rights of the KofC were at stake.

The KofC had asked the judge to throw out FFRF's legal challenge because it had not named anyone actually harmed by the statue. In response, FFRF found an atheist who submitted a statement saying he had skied past the statue many times and had been offended by it. As a result, on November 27, a U.S. District Judge threw out the KofC's request. A trial was scheduled for March 2013.

February 6

Republican lawmakers wrote a letter of protest to Air Force Secretary Michael Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz, urging them to restore the original logo of the the Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office (RCO). In December 2011, RCO expunged a reference to God on its logo, changing it from the Latin phrase for "Doing God's Work With Other People's Money" to "Doing Miracles With Other People's Money." The Air Force capitulated after months of pressure from the Military

Association of Atheists and Freethinkers, which claimed victory.

March 7

Vatican City – After a failed attempt in August, the activist hacker group Anonymous twice attacked the Vatican's website, rendering it inaccessible. The group issued an anti-Catholic statement saying why it targeted the "corrupt" Catholic Church: "Anonymous decided today to besiege your site in response to the doctrine, to the liturgies, to the absurd and anachronistic concepts that your for-profit organization spreads around the world."

March 9

The opening salvo of the Freedom From Religion Foundation's anti-Catholic ad campaign was a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. The timing of the ad coincided with threats to religious liberty from the Obama administration. Variations of the ad appeared on May 8 in the *Washington Express* as well as the *Washington Post*, on June 1-3 in the weekend edition of *USA Today*, and on July 4 in the *Los Angeles Times*.

The pretext of the ad was the Catholic Church's opposition to the Health and Human Services mandate forcing Catholic non-profits to include abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization in its insurance plans. Many in the media vilified the bishops in framing opposition to this mandate as a "war on women."

The ad began: "It's time to quit the Roman Catholic Church. Will it be reproductive freedom, or back to the Dark Ages?" The ad blamed the Catholic Church for promoting "acute misery, poverty, needless suffering, unwanted pregnancies, overpopulation, social evils and deaths." It said the bishops are "launching a ruthless political Inquisition" against women. It talked about "preying priests" and corruption "going all the way to the top." In an appeal to Catholic women, it opined, "Apparently, you're like the battered woman who, after

being beaten down every Sunday, feels she has no place else to go.” The ad took the form of an open letter to “liberal” and “nominal” Catholics. It ended with a pun on the phrase “exiting en masse,” imploring Catholics to “Please, Exit en Mass.”

March 24

Washington, D.C. – A “Reason Rally” attended by atheists expressed an animus against Christianity in general, and Catholicism in particular. “Hey Kids,” one sign read, “It’s Okay–GOD is PRETEND.” “Religion is Like a Penis,” another sign read. “It’s OK to have one...But it is NOT OK to whip it out in public, shove it in my face, or tell me what to do because you have one...” One woman held a sign demanding that adherents of the three monotheistic religions “Get Out of My Panties.” There were signs such as “So many Christians, so few lions.” There was a man dressed as Jesus riding an inflatable dinosaur; another man held a large wooden cross with a mask of “The Joker” on top.

The entertainment featured Australian songwriter Tim Minchin, who thrilled the crowd with “The Pope Song.” The lyrics were explicit: “I don’t give a f*** if calling the pope a motherf***er means...You see I don’t give a f*** what any other motherf***er believes about Jesus and his motherf***ing mother.”

The big draw was atheist Richard Dawkins. He implored the crowd to “ridicule and show contempt” for people of faith. “Mock them, ridicule them in public,” he bellowed. Dawkins not only mocked the Eucharist, he advised the crowd to ask Catholics, “Do you really believe...that when a priest blesses a wafer, it turns into the body of Christ?”

March 28

The Air Force removed a mandatory reading from its Squadron Officer School correspondence course in response to pressure from the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). The

document was intended for a part of the course called "Spiritual and Ethical Responsibilities" and connected regular chapel attendance with good leadership: "If you attend chapel regularly, both officers and Airmen are likely to follow this example. If you are morally lax in your personal life, a general moral indifference within the command can be expected." These words offended one atheist captain taking the course. He enlisted the help of MRFF to expunge any mention of the connection between religion and morality.

March 31

Fort Bragg, NC – Atheists organized a festival called "Rock Beyond Belief" at Fort Bragg in retaliation against "Rock the Fort," a Billy Graham Evangelistic Association event that took place in 2011. The organizer of the festival stated that he was personally offended by a Christian event on the base. The festival was promoted with a music video celebrating the burning of churches and synagogues.

April 12

Americans United for Separation of Church and State issued a press release attacking the "Fortnight for Freedom" as "thoroughly misguided." Americans United executive director Barry Lynn accused the bishops of seeking to "maintain their privileged status."

April 16 – 30

Woonsocket, RI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) issued letters to the mayor and fire chief demanding that a memorial cross dedicated to fallen soldiers of the two world wars be removed from its location outside the fire department headquarters. FFRF's demands also extended into cyberspace when the group effectively called for censorship by requesting that the Fireman's Prayer and the image of a grieving firefighter consoled by an angel be removed from the Woonsocket Fire Department's web page dedicated to honoring fallen firefighters. The Mayor of Woonsocket stood his ground and said: "I'm not going to fold. This monument is not going

to go away.”

April 19

Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed a formal complaint with the IRS against Bishop Daniel Jenky of the Diocese of Peoria. In a press release, Americans United executive director Barry Lynn claimed that Bishop Jenky was in “violation of federal law” when he said that “every practicing Catholic...must vote their Catholic consciences.” This was an attempt to intimidate and silence a bishop who had every right to voice his opinion on the political process.

April 25

The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers (MAAF) pressured the Air Force to remove Bibles from on-base lodging. A legal review by the Air Force Services Agency demonstrated “no requirement to have Bibles in the lodging checklist.” Although the Air Force did not comply with MAAF’s demand and cited “multiple First Amendment practices and obligations,” a revised checklist was slated to take effect in October 2013. Although MAAF declared, prematurely, that “Air Force Services Operations has promised to end their Bible requirement,” whether or not the Air Force will comply with the atheist demand remains to be seen.

April 25

Faithful America, a non-Catholic group, petitioned Bishop Robert McManus of the Diocese of Worcester to change his mind after he disinvited pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage Catholic Victoria Kennedy (widow of Sen. Edward Kennedy) from giving the commencement address at Anna Maria College. After collecting 20,000 signatures, Faithful America delivered them to the bishop, who remained firm in his decision.

April 27

Catholics for Choice (CFC) issued a dissident “open letter” in a ploy to discredit the bishops’ authoritative defense of Catholic teaching on contraception. This was an attempt to

frame the bishops' defense of religious liberty against the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate as a "war on women." What was more pernicious, however, was that CFC, an anti-Catholic front group, claimed to speak for all American Catholics, pitting them against the authority of the bishops.

Predictably, instead of the Magisterium, the letter invoked "our tradition of social justice." The letter said: "The bishops' insistence on eliminating access to contraception does not reflect our view or the views of many of the 68 million Catholics in the United States." The letter concluded by saying that "if you want to know what Catholics think about contraception, ask us—not the bishops" and implored readers to sign on in support.

May 23

Hamilton County, TN – The Freedom From Religion Foundation lashed out at the Hamilton County Commission for holding Christian prayers before meetings. The group sent a letter asking commissioners to "discontinue official, government prayers before government meetings."

June 7

John Gehring, an official at Faith in Public Life (an organization funded by atheist billionaire George Soros), sent a memo to his comrades in the media, a copy of which was leaked to the Catholic League. He instructed them on how to handle the bishops and the "Fortnight for Freedom" events that were to be conducted from June 21 to July 4. He recommended they begin by questioning the prelates why the Obama "accommodation" wasn't good enough. "You have to ask why the bishops can't take yes for an answer," he wrote.

Teaching them how to handle the "war on the Catholic Church," Gehring advised, "Several bishops have used inflammatory and irresponsible rhetoric that conflates a process of working through complex policy issues with a fundamental attack on the Catholic Church." He also worried about the politicization of

the religious liberty campaign, an effort made possible, he neglected to say, because of the politicization of religion by President Obama.

Gehring pressed his lackeys to victimize the victim, beckoning them to ask the bishops—all of whom refuse to prostitute their principles— “Are you willing to sacrifice Catholic charities, colleges and hospitals if you don’t get your way on the contraceptive mandate?”

Finally, Gehring provided a go-to list of Catholic activists who can be counted on to subvert the bishops’ message.

June 13 – August 6

Clifton Park, NY – In a June 13 letter, the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) wrote to Shenendehowa Central Schools of Clifton Park demanding that a music teacher refrain from having children pray. FFRF also took offense at “pervasively Christian music.” FFRF followed with another letter on July 24 and another on August 6, insisting on the removal of songs which mention God from the curriculum. One FFRF lawyer stated in a letter, “It is deeply troubling that the school district will not take action to remove prayers—even in the form of songs—from the curriculum.” The offending songs were “Thank You for the World So Sweet,” which contains the line, “Thank you God for everything,” and “Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep,” which contains the verse, “I pray the Lord my soul to keep.” FFRF accused the school district of “improper proselytizing” and threatened the use of “legal options.” In response, a school attorney said that the songs “did not violate any of the District’s First Amendment obligations” and that “none of the songs were taught, or used, as a prayer.” The attorney was careful to point out that “the musical selections...were used appropriately to teach specific musical concepts, and as the basis for secular classroom activities.”

June 19

St. Louis, MO and New York, NY – After placing its “Quit the Church” ads in papers across the country, the Freedom from Religion Foundation erected billboards in two major cities. In New York, the billboard was located in a prominent part of Manhattan: Times Square. In St. Louis, the billboard was located at I-70 and North Broadway, allowing 300,000 people driving by each week to see it during its four-week run. The billboard read, “QUIT THE CHURCH.” Underneath this headline were the words, “PUT WOMEN’S RIGHTS OVER BISHOPS’ WRONGS.” This was an attempt to denigrate the U.S. bishops and frame Catholic opposition to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate as a “war on women.”

June 20

Westchester, NY – A class-action lawsuit was filed on behalf of a lesbian employee of St. Joseph’s Medical Center. She was seeking medical coverage for her “spouse.” Because St. Joseph’s Medical Center is self-insured, it is not bound by New York State law that recognizes gay “marriage”; it is therefore exempt from granting medical benefits to a “married” lesbian. That is why the attorney for the lesbian employee was challenging the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal statute.

June 21

The Freedom From Religion Foundation launched a major TV ad campaign. In allusion to the French Revolution, the militant atheist group described their campaign as “storming the ‘Bishops’ Bastille.’” The campaign ran for two weeks on CNN, Comedy Central, Discovery, History Channel, Science Channel, MSNBC, and Fox. In the ad, actress Julia Sweeney declared that she is a “cultural Catholic” and is “no longer a believer.” She demonized the U.S. bishops for their opposition to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate: “...the Catholic bishops are framing their opposition to contraceptive coverage as a religious freedom issue, but the real threat to freedom is the bishops, who want to be free to force their

dogma on people who don't want it."

July 10

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) ran an ad in the *New York Times* demonstrating just how disgraceful the professional victims' lobby had become. The ad was part and parcel of SNAP's agenda to sunder the Catholic Church while purporting to protect children. Instead of looking at the positive reforms made by the U.S. bishops over the last decade, SNAP rehashed its claim that there is an ongoing abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, despite all the evidence to the contrary. Indeed, 99.98% of Catholic priests did not have a credible accusation made against them in 2011.

July 31 – October 5

Frankenmuth, MI – A steel cross was erected with private funding in 1976 as part of the city's celebration of America's Bicentennial. It came under attack from Americans United for Separation of Church and State. In July, Americans United demanded that the city promptly remove the cross, threatening litigation on the grounds that it violated the constitutional prohibition against the "establishment of religion." In a letter, the group claimed to have received a complaint regarding the cross, but did not disclose the name of the complainant. The Thomas More Law Center sprung into action on September 6 to defend the city against this attack. On October 5, the city rejected the demand. Chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center responded on behalf of the city: "The cross was raised up by a grateful community. And this community will fight to keep it."

August 13

Cranford, NJ – At a press conference, American Atheists unveiled their billboards that were to appear in Charlotte, North Carolina in time for the Democratic National Convention. The billboards attacked Mormonism and Christianity as part of a campaign that "exposes the foolishness of religion in the political landscape." The billboard attacking Christianity

read "Christianity: Sadistic God; Useless Savior / 30,000+ Versions of 'Truth' / Promotes Hate, Calls it 'Love' / Atheism: Simply Reasonable." The billboard attacking Mormonism read: "Mormonism: God is a Space Alien / Baptizes Dead People / Big Money, Big Bigotry / Atheism: Simply Reasonable." Both billboards implored viewers to join American Atheists.

August 16 – 19

Milwaukee, WI – A complaint by the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) claimed that a promotion by organizers of the Milwaukee Irish Fest was discriminatory and violated civil rights laws. According to the Irish Fest website, "guests who donate nonperishable food items prior to the liturgy are admitted to the festival free of charge after the Mass." In response to FFRF's intolerance, Irish Fest organizers stripped their promotion of the Mass attendance requirement and offered free admittance to everyone who dropped off a food donation by 11 A.M. In the name of "tolerance," a tradition that had been going on for years was stamped out to appease a few, described by FFRF as "some Irish folk who have been attending the event for years, but do not subscribe to the Catholic faith—or any faith for that matter—and felt ostracized by festival officials."

August 18

The Freedom From Religion Foundation ran a feature spot on select national public television affiliates for three months, reaching three million people. There were two versions of the ad, which was called "Spotlight on Freethought and the First Amendment." In the ad, the narrator ascribed the worst bloodshed in world history to religion: "More wars have been waged, more people killed, in the name of religion than by any other institutional force in human history." Furthermore, the ad falsely spun American history to say that Christianity had no role in the founding of America.

August 21

Rossville, GA – The Freedom from Religion Foundation sent a

letter to the superintendent of Walker County Schools, taking offense at the activities instituted by the coach of Ridgeland High School's football program. The alleged offenses included: team trips to a church; post-game prayers led by the coach; team apparel sporting Bible verses; the participation of the coach in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes; and advocating a Christian football camp for students.

August 21

The public relations director for American Atheists explained on Fox News that the reason the group was filing a lawsuit against the display of the Ground Zero cross at the 9/11 museum was that it made non-Christians "physically ill." However, the great majority of people who died in the September 11 attacks were Christians. The cross to be displayed was a non-denominational symbol formed by two beams retrieved from the rubble.

August 22 – September 28

Jefferson City, MO – The ACLU filed a lawsuit in federal court on behalf of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), Call to Action, and the Voice of the Faithful-Kansas City to block a new state law prohibiting the disruption of worship services. The "House of Worship Protection Act," was signed into law on July 8 and went into effect on August 28. It prohibits the intentional disruption of a house of worship through profanity, "rude or indecent behavior" or noise. It also prohibits "intimidation" of those "exercising the right of religious freedom in or outside a house of worship or seeking access to a house of worship." The plaintiffs claimed that the law would be used to "chill" them "from engaging in expressive conduct," which could potentially include SNAP's demonstrations near churches. After a hearing on the plaintiff's motion on September 11, their request for preliminary injunctive relief was denied on September 28.

August 23

Lyndonville, VT – Two lesbians settled a discrimination

lawsuit filed against a Vermont inn that refused to host a homosexual wedding reception; they were represented by the ACLU. The Catholic owners agreed to the settlement because of the threat that litigation posed to their business. According to the settlement, the Wildflower Inn had to pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$10,000 to the Vermont Human Rights Commission for violating Vermont's Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act. In addition, the inn had to pay \$20,000 to a charitable trust which would be disbursed according to the couple's discretion.

September 3

Worcester, MA – A “married” homosexual couple filed a “discrimination” lawsuit against the Catholic Church, alleging that the Diocese of Worcester backed out of a transaction to sell them a mansion that they wanted to turn into an inn for the purpose of hosting homosexual weddings and other events. This was an attempt to criminalize the Church for its defense of traditional marriage. One of the plaintiffs said: “Here we are in the 21st century in Massachusetts and we’re experiencing this kind of discrimination.” Lawyers for the diocese said the plaintiffs did not come up with the financing.

September 18

New York, NY – A New York City Catholic priest was accused of promoting Mitt Romney for president after the weekly bulletin of an Upper East Side Catholic church included a letter by six former U.S. ambassadors to the Vatican; the letter endorsed Romney. The priest responsible for including the letter became the subject of a petition asking New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan to do something about it. The petition drive was staged by two groups unconnected to the parish: Catholics United and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

The Catholic League pointed out at the time that Catholics United is a left-wing group funded by atheist billionaire

George Soros with virtually no support in the Catholic community. It continually misrepresents Catholic teachings while working against the religious liberty rights of Catholics. Americans United was founded in the 1940s as an expressly anti-Catholic organization (it was known as Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State), and was responsible for fomenting hatred against Catholics at the time. It has since worked relentlessly to diminish religious liberty.

September 18 – October 18

Kountze, TX – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) sent a threatening letter to the superintendent of the Kountze Independent School District claiming that the banners and signs used by football cheerleaders were unconstitutional because they contained bible verses. In response to FFRF's letter, officials prohibited the cheerleaders from displaying these messages. The edict went into effect on September 18. Students and parents were so outraged that they filed a lawsuit against the district on September 20. On October 18, the judge ruled in favor of the cheerleaders.

September 21

San Francisco, CA – Homosexuals paraded around naked at the annual Folsom Street Fair and, as always, mocked the Catholic clergy and religious. They dressed as cardinals, bishops, and nuns. There was even a group that disparaged the Jesuits, the "Society of Janus"; their specialty is BDSM (bondage, domination, sadism and masochism).

October 3

A petition demanding the resignation of Bishop Robert Finn was found on the website of change.org, home to mostly left-wing activists. Anyone could sign it—one didn't have to be Catholic or from Finn's diocese. There was no grassroots rebellion against Bishop Finn: Almost 7,400 signatures were sent to the diocese, and all but approximately 150 were from outside the area; the signatories even included activists from foreign

countries. The Catholic League responded with a press release exposing the petition and the real source behind the phony petition drive, none other than Bishop Finn's enemies: the *Kansas City Star* and the *National Catholic Reporter*. Both are located in Kansas City, Missouri. Both had been calling for Finn to resign. The petition drive was evidence of the most important goal of anti-Catholics for the past decade: to bring down a bishop.

October 5

Jon O'Brien, president of Catholics for Choice (CFC), issued a statement attacking Sister Mary Ann Walsh, director of media relations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Sister Walsh had warned on her blog that "Some agenda groups who oppose one or more Catholic teachings, for example use the name 'Catholic,' even when there seems little evidence of Catholics in their ranks and no evidence that they represent Catholic teaching." She singled out CFC and pointed out that, for 25 years, the organization was led by the former director of the National Abortion Federation. O'Brien lashed out, going even so far as to say that "the bishops haven't said or done the right thing" when it comes to "matters of social justice."

October 18

Yelm, WA – A YouTube video captured the profanity-laced, vitriolic anti-Catholicism of JZ Knight, a spiritual leader of the cult, Ramtha School of Enlightenment. Her tirade included the following statements: "F*** you, you Catholics, you a**holes!" "I take your f***ing faith on." "We will come to you in a terror. We will quake your g**d*****, God-released country. We will bring ... Saint Peter's temple down and we'll swallow it in the sea." "F***ing, absolute, g**d*****, demon-possessed religion of the earth."

October 24 – January 15

Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed an amicus brief with the First Circuit Court of Appeals

concerning a case in which the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) gave the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) control over a program assisting sex-trafficking victims. The USCCB refused to fund other social service agencies that would not promise to not use public funds for abortion or contraceptive services.

The ACLU challenged this arrangement, claiming that it violated the separation of church and state and that it denied essential services to sex trafficking victims. Although a federal district court had ruled in the ACLU's favor, the USCCB and HHS were now both claiming that the case should be thrown out on the grounds that taxpayers lack the "standing" to bring such matters into court. Americans United claimed that there was a "taxpayer right" to "challenge government grants that violate church-state separation." In this tag-team effort, one activist group abetted another in trying to usurp the legal autonomy of the Catholic Church using the canard of "essential public services."

November

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) claimed five victories:

In Buhler, Kansas, as a result of a complaint from FFRF, the city of Buhler agreed to redesign its city seal and replace a large sign in the city's park. FFRF objected to the appearance of a cross on both.

In Rosenberg, Texas, the principal of Deaf Smith Elementary School was instructed by the school district to refrain from sending his newsletters because of their biblical references after FFRF complained.

In Elkhorn City, Kentucky, intimidation by FFRF resulted in the cessation of prayer at a public school. Religious fliers were banned, as well.

In Barnsdall, Oklahoma, FFRF forced Barnsdall Junior/Senior

High School into removing the reference to God in the Student Creed, which formerly included the words, “reverence to our God.”

In New Haven, Michigan, FFRF pressured Endeavor Elementary School into removing a promotional church sign located on the school’s lawn. The school would now only display the sign on Sundays, when the church rents its cafeteria.

November 7-13

For standing fast in their commitment to the civil rights of the unborn, the defense of marriage, and the cause of religious liberty, the bishops were condemned by three entities: Catholics for Choice (CFC), Catholics United, and Faithful America. CFC told the bishops that they need to “realize the error of their ways.” Catholics United and Faithful America told the bishops to “refocus their attention on caring for the poor and vulnerable,” by which they meant pushing for more welfare.

November 14

Riverside, CA – Americans United for the Separation of Church and State threatened to sue the City of Riverside unless it removed a giant cross atop Mount Rubidoux, where it has stood since 1907.

November 15

Brentwood, MD – Americans United for the Separation of Church and State retaliated against the Brentwood Town Council for reciting the Lord’s Prayer in council meetings. Americans United sent three letters asking that they terminate the practice or make it inclusive to also encompass other religions’ prayers.

December 4

The American Humanist Association, an atheist group, advised all newcomers to the U.S. House of Representatives to stay away from the Congressional Prayer Caucus because it believes

in the National Motto ("In God We Trust") and wants to continue the practice of opening Congress with a daily prayer.

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SNAP UNRAVELS

On March 13, the Catholic League issued this report [[click here](#)] by Bill Donohue examining the deposition of Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) director David Clohessy. The deposition made clear that Clohessy has been (a) lying to the media about his work (b) falsely advertising his group as a rape crisis center (c) working with unseemly lawyers (d) exploiting his clients by providing unauthorized "counseling" services (e) ripping off those who are truly in need of help by failing to contribute even a dime for licensed counselors, and (f) pursuing priests on the basis of legal criteria he admits he cannot explain. The report was also mailed to the bishops.

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SNAP'S DEFENDERS RETALIATE

After the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) was issued subpoenas demanding 23 years of the group's communications with victims in the course of lawsuits in St. Louis and Kansas City, supporters in the media as well as activist groups fell in line behind SNAP director David Clohessy and his discredited activist organization.

March 13: Terence McKiernan, the president of the activist group BishopAccountability.org, declared his belief that "SNAP's achievements, and their leading role in the worldwide movement for children's rights, will earn Barbara Blaine and David Clohessy the Nobel Peace Prize."

March 13: Terry O'Neill, president of the National

Organization for Women, attacked the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: "In addition to playing a major role in the right-wing war on women, the all-male hierarchy of the Catholic Church is trying to silence an organization dedicated to helping women and men who have been victimized by clergy." She accused the bishops of "shooting the messenger," i.e., SNAP.

March 13: Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, said, "The bishops are playing hardball with survivors of priest abuse, but the bishops are not playing hardball with priest predators. The Conference of Catholic Bishops needs to focus on stopping cleric sexual abuse and the hierarchy's cover ups."

March 13: In a blog post entitled "The Hierarchy Re-Abuses the Sex Victims," Andrew Sullivan attacked Catholic League president Bill Donohue for defending the Catholic Church: "Donohue is a thug. But he is for the hierarchy what Hannity is for the GOP base." Sullivan took issue with Donohue's remark that the Church does not need "altar boys" for lawyers, who need to get tough. Sullivan remarked, "Sometimes, you realize that for some Catholics, nothing has changed since the revelation of the mass rape of children, altar boys often a prime target."

March 13: The *New York Times* ran a front-page story on Clohessy's deposition. Bill Donohue was quoted in the story, and his comments set off a firestorm.

March 14: A *New York Times* editorial entitled "Hurting Victims' Advocates" was critical of the Catholic Church for allowing "aggressive" lawyers to press Clohessy. In doing so, the newspaper provided cover to SNAP's rapacious activism abetted by vengeful lawyers using methods that are unethical at best and illegal at worst. Clohessy was quoted as saying, "The real motive is to harass and discredit and bankrupt SNAP, while discouraging victims, witnesses, whistle-blowers,

police, prosecutors and journalists from seeking our help.” To which the *Times* responded, “Given the aggressive legal tactics, it’s hard not to think that he is right. The judges asked to rule on motions to compel information must reject unfairly burdensome discovery requests. When the sex-abuse scandal erupted a decade ago, church leaders spoke of reconciliation with the victims. Now, in threatening to expose private files compiled by advocates for abuse survivors, they are giving victims new reason to retreat into fear and secrecy. For the church to target SNAP compounds the horror.” At the time, the Catholic League remarked, “When the *Times* is sued, does it hire wimpy lawyers? Does it allow itself to be a punching bag? Not on your life: they hire the most aggressive attorneys they can buy.”

March 19: In an opinion piece, *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni said of the Catholic hierarchy that it “keeps giving American Catholics fresh reasons for rebellion.” He contended that widespread media coverage of priestly sexual abuse was not the result of “anti-Catholic and anti-religious bias,” but instead resulted from a “magnitude of the violation of trust.” If this were the case, the *Times* would have covered with equal intensity the epidemic of child sexual abuse by rabbis as well as the alarming rate of child sexual abuse in the public schools.

March 19: The *Newark Star Ledger* demonized the Church in no uncertain terms: “The church’s new legal assault on SNAP is unconscionable. For decades, pedophile priests created thousands of voiceless victims. SNAP gives those victims a voice—and now the bishops want to silence that, too.” Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded by sending our report on Clohessy to the editorial page editor, pointing out in no uncertain terms that “the man is a liar and a fraud.”

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This Joel Pett cartoon ran in the *Philadelphia Daily News* on February 20. It attempts to undermine the U.S. bishops' opposition to the HHS abortifacient mandate. The cartoon also paints all priests as abusers.

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